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PROBLEMS AND DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH ON PUBLIC SCHOOL DESEGREGATION.

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THIS PAPER REVIEWS RESEARCH ON PUBLIC SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND SUGGESTS DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES. IT NOTES THAT RESEARCHERS SHOULD CONTINUE TO INVESTIGATE THE FACTORS WHICH AFFECT THE PACE OF DESEGREGATION, SUCH AS THE PRESSURES OF THE NEGRO COMMUNITY AND OF THE STATE AND OTHER AGENCIES. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY SHOULD STUDY THE SPECIFIC HOSTILITIES WHITE PARENTS FEEL TOWARD DESEGREGATION SINCE THE ATTITUDES OF MANY NEGROES IS A RESPONSE TO THESE HOSTILITIES. STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOL DESEGREGATION, ALSO CANDIDATES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH, INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL PARKS, THE MERGING OF URBAN AND SUBURBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND THE ENLISTMENT OF SUPPORT FROM INFLUENTIAL PRIVATE CITIZENS. CURRENT RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTS OF INTEGRATION INDICATES THAT THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND ASPIRATIONS OF OTHER STUDENTS IN A CLASSROOM POSITIVELY INFLUENCE A NEGRO STUDENT'S ACHIEVEMENT AND HIS SENSE OF CONTROL OVER HIS FATE. MOREOVER, THE EXTENT AND QUALITY OF THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEGRO STUDENT IN THE DESEGREGATED SCHOOL, HIS VULNERABILITY TO STRESS, THE RACE OF THE STUDENTS WITH WHOM HE IS TO BE COMPARED OR WITH WHOM HE COMPARES HIMSELF, AND THE RACE OF AN EXPERIMENTER OR TEACHER ALSO AFFECT HIS ACHIEVEMENT, AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE STUDIED. SPECIFIC RESEARCH ON THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS ON THE LEARNING PROCESS MIGHT ALSO BE CONDUCTED. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE RESEARCH DISSEMINATION AND TRAINING CONFERENCE, HELD AT YESHIVA UNIVERSITY, JUNE 26-30, 1967. (LB)

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Public school segregation must be regarded as a national problem that is not confined to the South. The recent report, Equality of Educational Opportunity (the Coleman Report),[1] amply documents the fact that racial isolation of pupils is still the norm in American schools. The report states that in the fall of 1965, 87 percent of all Negro children in the first grade were attending predominantly Negro schools; in the twelfth grade the figure was 66 percent. According to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, "Racial isolation in the schools . . . is intense whether the cities are large or small, whether the proportion of Negro enrollment is large or small, whether they are located in the North or South."[2]

It is also well known that predominantly Negro schools in the North and South are generally inferior in the quality of educational services offered. For example, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights points out that Negro students are less likely than white students to attend schools that have adequate libraries, that offer courses in subjects such as science and languages, and that are not overcrowded. Negro students are more likely than white students to have teachers with low verbal achievement, to have substitute teachers, and to have teachers who are dissatisfied with their school assignment. Given these facts, it is clear that the responsibility of the Federal government with regard to furthering public school desegregation cannot be limited to any single region of the United States.

In order to decide what types of research are most likely to contribute to the implementation of governmental policy, one must consider the basic principles and objectives of the policy. With respect to school integration, it will be assumed that, insofar as possible, change efforts should be consistent with the following propositions:

1. The burden of adjusting to desegregation in a community should be shared as equitably as possible by all citizens, rather than being concentrated upon one segment of the total population.

2. The chief responsibility for carrying out desegregation should rest with local school officials and personnel; the changeover should not depend unduly upon the voluntary efforts of those private citizens whose constitutional rights are being violated under the status quo.

3. Since the larger goal of integration is to provide all children with adequate access to the privileges and responsibilities of society, it should be tied, wherever necessary, to a general improvement of facilities, staff, and curriculum.

4. In its famous 1954 ruling, the Supreme Court declared that school segregation was psychologically harmful to Negro children. The implication is that each additional day of forced attendance at segregated Negro schools may contribute further injury to the "hearts and minds" of these youngsters. Unnecessary delays, therefore, in bringing about change must be regarded by responsible officials as intolerable, and the goal of integration must be pursued with a sense of utmost urgency.

5. Integration involves more than just racially balanced enrollments. Principals and teachers must be responsive to the needs of those students who previously attended inferior segregated schools or who come from disadvantaged homes. The educational requirements of Negro children, however, should not be used as an excuse for setting up racially segregated classes within biracial schools.

The foregoing considerations are not intended to be exhaustive; they are mentioned merely to suggest some important empirical criteria for evaluating the adequacy of different implementation strategies. Research can provide

feedback on the extent to which these and other basic principles and objectives of integration are promoted by local desegregation programs. Also, research can increase our knowledge and understanding of the factors that influence the pace of desegregation. However, it should be recognized that research on desegregation is beset by many special difficulties. Pettigrew observes that the investigator in this realm is by definition a disturber of the equilibrium of educational and political establishments and, therefore, that he can expect to encounter frequent refusals of cooperation from school systems, hidden biases in officially released data, and constraints against pursuing certain lines of inquiry.[3] Pettigrew also mentions a number of special technical difficulties encountered in efforts to evaluate the effects of different types of schooling. These have to do with matters such as the following: 1, the nonrandom assignment of students to various types of schools (e.g., middle-class Negroes are more likely to be represented in desegregated schools and neighborhoods than lower-class Negroes); 2, the nonrandom treatment of students within schools (e.g., ability grouping); 3, the high attrition in Negro samples due to dropping out of school and residential mobility; 4, the noncomparability of social class categories across racial groups; and, 5, artifactual effects in evaluation studies associated with temporary spurts of motivation and other biasing phenomena (e.g., "Hawthorne effects").

RESEARCH ON FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PACE OF DESEGREGATION

In attempting to assess factors that influence the speed with which desegregation takes place in various localities, one must recognize the complexity of the causes of racial imbalance. On this point, the 1967 report

of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights states:

> . . . [Racial imbalance] has its roots in racial discrimination that has been sanctioned and even encouraged by government at all levels. It is perpetuated by the effects of past segregation and racial isolation. It is reinforced by demographic, fiscal, and educational changes taking place in the Nation's metropolitan areas. And it has been compounded by the policies and practices of urban school systems.[4]

Writing about conditions that affect the pace of desegregation, Pettigrew stresses the importance of Negro insistence, white resistance, and social structural barriers. It is his view that once token desegregation has taken place, the most critical determinant of the speed of further change is the amount of pressure exerted by the Negro community.[5] Dentler has taken a similar position on the basis of his own participation in several desegregation programs of small northern cities. He believes that in order for desegregation to become possible politically and educationally, Negroes must protest in a visible and unequivocal manner and that this protest must "resonate positively with some influential segment of the white population." It also seems plain to him that a very highly stratified class structure will act as a formidable barrier to desegregation. He then suggests another factor -- "a clear, sufficiently intense stimulus from state or other extra-local authorities." In the North, significant change has tended to occur in smaller communities only when impetus has been provided by strong state educational agencies.[6]

La Porte, Beker, and Willie found that in a middle-sized northern city pressures from local Negro protest groups and from the state education department were primarily responsible for initiating action on desegregation. A directive from the state education commissioner on racial imbalance seemed

to influence the situation by adding pressure on the local board of education and by helping to get the board "off the hook" with more conservative elements in the community.[7]

White Resistance and Related Problems

Cook, as well as others, has pointed out that attitudes alone are relatively poor predictors of white people's reactions to desegregation. Before integration occurred in the District of Columbia, for example, 52 percent of the white adult population were against it, 24 percent were neutral, and only 24 percent were favorable. But except for a brief strike by some students, which was not supported widely by adults, the first steps toward integration were carried out uneventfully. The school superintendent was sufficiently encouraged to speed up the entire process. When respondents in the pre-desegregation survey were reinterviewed at the end of the school year, it was found that of those who initially disapproved of the Supreme Court decision, only 29 percent felt that desegregation in Washington was not successful. Experiences in other cities bear out the point that even when there is widespread feeling against integration at the outset, the changeover may be affected smoothly and without incident.[8]

Pettigrew has cited evidence that white attitudes tend to become more favorable when desegregation is perceived as a fait accompli or as inevitable.[5] Various alternative explanations of this phenomenon readily come to mind: 1, perhaps actual experience or discussion and reflection show the imagined dangers of desegregation to be false or exaggerated; or, 2, the conflict between reality and the desire for continued segregation generates so much internal tension that the wish is suppressed or abandoned. Research on this problem may yield useful information about the necessary conditions for inducing favorable attitude change.

What is particularly needed to improve our understanding of the relationship between attitudes and overt resistance to desegregation is an emphasis upon the psychological sources of segregationist feelings and beliefs, rather than -- as in the past -- upon the attitudes per se. To be able to explain why white parents resist racial change in the schools, it is necessary to know in what ways they experience such change as personally threatening when it involves their own children.

Williams has pointed out that any sustained review of the research evidence "will convey a powerful impression of the importance of 'threat' in the entire matter." He discusses the threat of status loss as being particularly potent, since quite often when desegregation occurs the white schools that receive the heaviest influx of Negro students are in working class or lower middle-class neighborhoods where the social status of residents is at best precarious. For these people, there are few if any alternative ways of maintaining status once the prospective change takes place. According to Williams, there is a very wide range of possible threats in a proposed move to bring Negro and white children together in the same schools when they have been separated previously. For example, anxiety may refer to possible increases in cost and taxes; quality of formal education; physical safety and comfort (fear of aggression, fear for health condition, hazards of transportation); social practices (manners, language,etc.); sexual threats; status threat to parents vis-à-vis their ingroup peers; threat to a categorical sense of superiority; and threat to long-run competitive advantages (jobs, housing, politics, etc.).[9]

Additional investigations are needed to determine how the particular sources of threat to white parents vary for different socioeconomic groups, with differences in the structure of the white and Negro subcommunities and with regional, demographic, and rural-urban differences. Once research has

identified the various specific fears that white people have about integration, it should be possible to assess their validity in the light of actual conditions and to take appropriate remedial action. Thus, if there is widespread concern about deterioration of scholastic standards, an information campaign could be undertaken to acquaint the population with relevant facts about the impact of desegregation upon the quality of education in comparable communities where the changeover has already occurred and about the various steps that would be taken in the local school system to preserve or even raise academic standards.

In at least one northern community that was studied, white resistance to a "Princeton Plan" school pairing did not appear to be inspired by fear of educational deterioration. Rogers and Swanson found that in a high income, professional neighborhood of New York City where interest in school affairs had always been high, as reflected in attendance at Parents Association meetings and other types of activity, a pairing was accomplished smoothly. But in a lower middle-class area, parents who previously had been markedly apathetic about the schools were vehemently opposed to a similar desegregation step. From an analysis of the demographic charactertistics of the two areas, the authors concluded that status anxiety was a primary motivating factor in the resisting community. The latter was largely composed of upwardly mobile members of minority cultural groups who had moved to their present homes from ethnic ghetto areas closer to the central city. Because of their limited occupational skills and education, they had probably reached the limits of their residential and economic mobility.[10] Similarly, Tumin has reported that "hard core" resisters to integration in Guilford County, North Carolina, tended to be the low men on the economic totem pole who were the least educated, the narrowest in social perspective, and the most anomic element in the local

white population. They were the group that was most vulnerable to Negro competition for jobs and housing and most likely to bear the brunt of school desegregation.[11]

It is both morally and practically desirable that desegregation be carried out on an equitable basis. Common sense suggests that the wider the range of neighborhoods and socioeconomic groups that can be involved in the initial process, the less intense will be the status threat and the resultant sense of victimization experienced by particular white groups. This proposition can be tested by means of comparative studies in two or more communities that are about to undergo either selective or total-system integration. It would also be worthwhile to carry out retrospective studies of localities that have already experienced one or the other type of change. Aside from the question of whether they instigate less opposition, it would be desirable to establish empirically whether or not system-wide changeovers are more efficient than the piecemeal variety by virtue of stimulating and permitting a kind of unified and overall planning that is hardly possible when the latter procedure is followed.

An important aspect of the problem of white resistance has to do with the causes of violence and the development of adequate techniques for its control. It is already well established that the public stance of local officials, law enforcement officers, and political leaders can have a decisive influence on whether outbreaks of mass violence will occur. As Vander Zanden observes, the crucial factor governing the incidence or severity of disturbances attendant upon desegregation has "tended to be the determined, unequivocal policy instituted and pursued by authorities and the stern, nontolerant policy inaugurated toward 'agitators' and demonstrators."[12]

Among the problems still in need of study is that of the relationship

between the anomic, psychologically alienated condition of certain low status white groups and the emergence of violent activism. In their study of white resistance to the pairing of schools in New York City, Rogers and Swanson noted "an almost complete absence of intermediate community organizations between the citizenry and the city government. At the risk of oversimplification, the sociopolitical structure of the neighborhood consists of city-wide and local public officials who make major decisions for the area and the large, powerless, alienated, and usually apathetic, though recently very activist, mass." The authors speculated that if the white population had been able to express their interests and grievances through local organizations, "they would have had a built-in safety valve for 'bleeding off' their fears and sense of alienation." If they had had an opportunity to meet with other groups, to hear other points of view, and to have some of their questions answered, they might even have developed a stake in improving the public schools for all children.[10]

These observations may have bearing upon the situation in the Deep South where community organizational activity of all kinds is very low as compared with other regions. But at present it is an open question whether Rogers and Swanson's analysis of the relationship between sociopolitical powerlessness and isolation, on the one hand, and emotional activism, on the other, can be applied to localities other than the one they studied. From a practical standpoint, it is clear that prolonged open debate about the desirability of desegregating a local school system can have the effect of uniting and strengthening the segregationist elements in the community. Nevertheless, there are numerous instances in which desegregation was successfully accomplished in southern and border states with minimal advance publicity or opportunity for discussion. There is a need for research on the factors that govern white responses to

relatively open and relatively closed desegregation procedures. Presumably, reactions in the white community can safely be ignored by public officials only when there is good reason to believe that the changeover will not arouse intense feelings of threat and victimization among sizable elements of the population. A particularly harmful type of white opposition is that which takes the form of harassment of Negro children by white students. Permissive attitudes on the part of white parents and school authorities seem to have much to do with its occurrence.

An interesting strategy for studying outbreaks of violence has been recommended by Suchman, Dean, and Williams.[13] It involves assigning special "on tap" field workers the task of going into communities on short notice to do impromptu yet systematic on-the-spot investigations of riots, mob action, etc. Using interview and observational techniques, they would search for significant background conditions that led up to the incidents and would attempt to describe the full course of events. These studies would be guided by hypotheses derived from more extensive types of community research.

Negro Attitudes About School Desegregation

That Negroes have not pressed vigorously for school integration in the South and North is apparent to all close observers of the civil rights movement. According to Lomax,[14] "NAACP people are hesitant to talk about it, but they are having a most difficult time getting local parents to start integration suits." On the whole, he adds, "Negro parents don't seem to be interested in school desegregation -- and not just from fear of reprisals, but simply because school integration isn't something large numbers of Negroes get excited about." Indeed, one has only to recall the stated goals of the major Negro protests and demonstrations of recent years -- Montgomery, Birmingham, Selma, and so on -- or to examine the writings of Martin Luther King,

Whitney Young, and other Negro leaders to recognize that school integration is not a high-priority target of the Negro revolution. Even in the large cities of the North, civil rights advocates who agitate for an amelioration of de facto segregation are disheartened by the lack of grass roots support. To those who believe that integration is the only feasible way to achieve educational equality for minority group children, the present situation is indeed unfortunate because numerically meaningful integration is not likely to occur in the foreseeable future except in response to determined Negro pressure.

At first glance, the apathy of many Negroes regarding school integration appears to reflect a lack of genuine interest in quality education, for it is certainly true that racial discrimination has long kept Negro education devoid of any real economic utility. Though the job market has improved in recent years, exclusion from white-collar and skilled employment is still a basic fact of life for most nonwhite Americans. In their responses to survey questionnaires, however, Negro parents display a considerable amount of concern about the adequacy of the education their children are receiving in public schools. In a study of the Negro community in Tallahassee, Killian and Grigg found that the need for better schools was ranked second in importance in a list of 18 sources of dissatisfaction.[15] Looking more closely at the apparent indifference of Negro parents to school integration, one begins to suspect that it is in large measure a manifestation of feelings of threat that are not unlike those experienced by the white resisters -- though different in specific content. Negroes may be afraid to expose their children to the open prejudice of white classmates and teachers or to devastating experiences of academic failure. In southern communities where entrance into previously all-white schools is on a "free choice" basis, Negro parents often have realistic

fears of official harassment, economic reprisals, and even physical harm. Moreover, southern Negro teachers, who often comprise the most numerous local Negro professional group, stand a good chance of losing their jobs when school systems become integrated. Killian and Grigg's data indicate that Negroes do not perceive quality education and desegregation as closely connected issues; therefore, although "better schools" was their second most important public concern, school integration had next to the lowest rank of all 18 items. Clearly, Negroes must be made aware through the dissemination of information that separate schools are intrinsically unequal. Widespread desegregation will not become politically possible until large numbers of minority group parents begin to feel that it is necessary.

The ability of Negroes to bring effective pressure to bear upon local officials will depend upon the level of internal communication, organization, and unit of purpose of the Negro community. Suchman, Dean, and Williams[13] observe that the Negro community is "actually a complexly differentiated cluster of subgroups, varying in socioeconomic status; geographic origin, occupational type, intelligence level of children, and attitude toward school desegregation. This internal differentiation is likely to be as complex, if not more so, than the differentiation within the majority community." Research on minority communities can reveal communication barriers between leaders and the population and between various segments of the community. For example, in her investigation of the Negro community in a small city in the mid-South, Burgess found that Negro leaders who favored desegregation were backed on this issue by 85 percent of the Negro upper class, but by only 60 percent of the middle class and 40 percent of the lower class. Not more than 48 percent of the total Negro sample favored immediate desegregation. Thus, the most active leaders were "out in front" of their constituency --

especially the less educated and lower income elements -- and in danger of being repudiated or censured.[16]

Case studies of Negro communities may reveal various ways in which leaders can improve their relations with different segments of the population. The motives, perceptions, goals, and action strategies of the former can be compared with the attitudes and needs of the latter. Suchman, Dean, and Williams[13] favor the use of "action research" techniques in Negro communities. Research personnel would work as "change agents" with community organizations to achieve the coordination of minority leadership structures; the coordination, unification, and increase of communication channels within the total minority community; and, finally, the opening of channels of communication with the white community.

Case Studies of School Desegregation

In-depth case studies of communities with different demographic, economic, and political-social characteristics can contribute much to our understanding of the basic forces that govern the course and the speed of desegregation. These investigations can focus on the processes leading up to the decision to comply with the Supreme Court ruling and/or on the processes of planning and accomplishing the changeover to nonsegregated schooling. The approach is exemplified by La Porte, Beker, and Willie's study of the evolution of a school desegregation policy in a small northern city. Their inquiry included 1, the sequence of action on the issue; 2, the structure and dynamics of "democratic" action in the city; 3, functional relationships among the public, the board of education, and the professional administrators of the school system; 4, the relative contributions of particular individuals and groups to community decisions; and, 5, extra-community influences. Their

chief sources of information were documents (minutes of meetings, policy statements, reports, etc.); lengthy interviews with key participants (the Mayor, members of the board of education, school administrators, heads of citizens' organizations, etc.); and direct observation of meetings and public hearings.[7] Case studies of this sort are rich sources of insights and hypotheses which can later be tested systematically by means of cross-community studies that utilize a relatively large sample of localities from which highly specified types of data are obtained.

Dentler observes that barriers to school integration in the North are far less formidable in smaller cities and suburbs than in big cities.[6] In smaller communities, technical solutions are available in abundance; and once the decision to desegregate has been made, it is relatively easy to prepare the community and the schools for the changeover. In big cities, however, technical solutions are few in number and generally drastic in effect upon both the clientele and the practitioners. Also, problems of communication between the Board of Education and parents and problems of new staffing and coordination of effort within the school system, etc., are far more complex. Dentler points out that among the six largest cities in the North, only Detroit has made some progress toward improving the racial balance of schools. "New York City, Chicago, and Philadelphia are more severely segregated today than they were in 1954." The situation calls for systematic case studies of our major metropolitan areas along the lines of the La Porte, Beker, and Willie inquiry. As Dentler puts it, "We must look to the social and cultural bases of Northern big city life to understand why so little change has occurred . . . We must take into account the political context and the cultural milieu of urban public education."

RESEARCH ON DEVICES AND STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMPLISHING DE FACTO DESEGREGATION

According to Dentler, several partially adequate technical solutions have been proposed for each of the larger northern cities. The two most promising technical solutions, he states, are also the most radical:

> One is the concept of the educational park. Here, big city systems would abandon neighborhood schools (or use them for very different purposes, such as community centers) and erect consolidated facilities housing from 5,000 to 20,000 students. Such a campus-style institution would be located to draw its students from a very wide residential base, one broad enough, perhaps, to surmount long-term changes in class and ethnic settlements. A second, related idea is to merge mainly white suburban school districts with increasingly Negro inner-city districts. District mergers could be achieved by state authorities and could break through ancient patterns of residential restriction.[17]

The most exciting aspect of the educational park idea is its potential for achieving excellence in public school systems, while at the same time providing a technical means of improving racial balance over wide areas. The park would allow the sharing of physical facilities on a rational basis; provide a wider range of special services -- academic, remedial, counseling -- than any single school; provide maximum opportunity for effective decentralization; allow flexible use of teacher skills; and permit greater opportunity for creative innovations such as closed-circuit television, team teaching, language laboratories, and automated equipment. There could also be fiscal gains over and above those resulting from improvements in operational efficiency, because much of the cost of the parks could be paid for by the Federal government under Title 1 of the Urban Renewal Act of 1949. As the

first educational parks come into being in various parts of the United States, it will be important that their educational and administrative merits and their ability to achieve racially balanced enrollments receive careful and systematic evaluation.

Another promising technical device mentioned by Dentler, the merging of suburban and central city school districts, could bring about massive and favorable changes in the ratio of white to Negro pupils in metropolitan school systems. Cases of this type of redistricting should be assessed for their effects upon residential occupancy patterns, percentage of white pupils who transfer to private schools, staff turnover and morale, scholastic standards, attitudes and organized response of parents, etc.

Compliance of School Officials with Desegregation Plans

Studies of the implementation of desegregation plans must take into account the extent of compliance of field personnel in the school system -- assistant superintendents, principals, and teachers -- with directives from the superintendent. Rogers and Swanson[10] suggest that these personnel, especially the principal, have tremendous impact on the extent of acceptance of white teachers, parents, and pupils of an incoming group of Negroes. The principal and others "may effectively negate, sabotage, or at least water down an integration plan that was developed after many months, perhaps years, of study and discussion."

"Freedom of Choice" Versus Mandatory Integration Plans

Research is needed to evaluate the relative merits of "freedom of choice" and mandatory integration plans in the South. Some civil rights leaders contend that it is unrealistic to expect that Negro parents in the South will ever initiate voluntary transfers of their children to predominantly

white schools to any significant extent -- that under this procedure integregation will probably never become a reality in the Deep South. It has been argued that having to apply for transfer gives the Negro the feeling of changing schools in order to be with white people. Lomax[14] suggests that "this is a difficult psychological hurdle for Southern Negroes to overcome. The truth is, on the whole, they don't want to be with white people as such. They do want the best schools, however . . ." Requesting transfer also exposes the Negro parent to white displeasure and possible vindictiveness. By slowing down the rate of integration, "free choice" plans prolong the period that young pioneer pupils remain a small, isolated minority, acutely vulnerable to the debilitating effects of social isolation and rejection by the white majority. Research is needed to show whether mandatory plans can introduce Negro newcomers into previously all-white schools in large enough numbers so that they can provide security for one another without arousing a high level of white resistance at the same time. Research could also test the proposition that mandatory plans are better than "free choice" plans in that they allow for rational, system-wide planning with regard to optimal distribution of students in relation to available staff, facilities, and space.

Enlisting Support of Influential Private Citizens

There is increasing evidence of a move on the part of the southern business community toward an accommodation with the civil rights program of the Federal government. For example, the Committees of One Hundred in Alabama and Mississippi, which consist of the top 100 business leaders of each state, have publicly advocated compliance with the Civil Rights Act. While other motives may be involved, economic self-interest is clearly consistent with this change to a more progressive position on racial matters. Research can explore techniques for activating local business leaders in

support of prompt and orderly school integration. Perhaps forums and conferences could be organized at colleges and universities on problems of education and local economic development and talks could be scheduled by visiting Federal officers.

RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTS OF DESEGREGATION

Among the important areas for research are the effects of desegregation on: 1, residential occupancy patterns; 2, parental attitudes and participation in school activities; 3, stability, morale, and attitudes of school staffs; 4, scholastic performance of white and Negro children; 5, social relationships among pupils of the same and different races; and, 6, self-concept, attitudes, and emotional adjustment of white and Negro pupils. Ideally, all of these variables should be studied by means of before-and-after research designs, with nondesegregated schools as controls. The present discussion, however, will be limited to the effects of desegregation on pupils covered in topics 4, 5, and 6 above.

Recently, two major investigations, one conducted by the U.S. Office of Education and the other by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, have been carried out in these areas. The U.S. Office of Education survey, Equality of Educational Opportunity (the Coleman Report),[1] embraced a fairly representative sample of over 4,000 elementary schools and high schools throughout the nation. Both questionnaires and objective tests were administered to pupils and teachers, with additional data being gathered on school facilities.

In evaluating the significance of the findings in this massive report that are relevant to the effects of desegregation, it is important to recognize that they are merely correlational and that causal inferences must be

drawn with utmost caution. The report indicates that the achievement of both Negro and white pupils, when their family background characteristics were partialled out, was more closely related to the educational proficiency of their classmates than to all objective school characteristics together (i.e., curriculum, expenditure per pupil, physical facilities, size of class, etc.) and to all teacher characteristics together (type of education, experience, verbal ability, attitudes, etc.). In the upper grades, the apparent influence of the quality of the student body on individual achievement was two to three times greater for Negro pupils than for white pupils.

Given the relatively high proficiency of white students, it is not surprising that as the proportion of whites in a school increased Negro achievement rose and that the effect was cumulative. The apparent impact of desegregation can be illustrated by comparing test scores in reading comprehension for Negro high school students in the metropolitan North, who never had a white classmate, with scores of metropolitan northern Negroes with similar family backgrounds who attended racially mixed schools from the early grades. When figures from Table 3.3.2 of the Coleman Report are consolidated, it is revealed that Negro ninth graders in predominantly white classes whose first interracial experience occurred in the primary grades had an average score of 48.2. This is about five points below the white norm for the same region, but less than two points below the national norm of 50.0. In contrast, Negro ninth graders who had never had white classmates averaged 43.8 -- almost 10 points below the white regional norm. Thus, it seems as though desegregation reduced the racial achievement gap by almost half. (The results based on Negro twelfth graders are similar, but perhaps less convincing because of the high rate of Negro dropouts after the ninth grade.) Additionally, the test scores of Negroes in majority white classrooms showed much more variability than did

the test scores of Negro children in classrooms with a smaller proportion of whites.

When the influence of the student body's educational background and aspirations was controlled, the relationship between racial composition of schools and Negro test scores appeared to be sharply reduced. Hence, Coleman and his associates concluded that the apparently beneficial effect of having a high proportion of white classmates did not come from racial composition per se, but from the high educational quality that is found, on the average, among white students.

Also associated with the amount of interracial contact were Negro attitudes toward scholastic effort. As the proportion of whites in the school increased, Negro children were more likely to feel that success and failure depended upon what they themselves were able to accomplish. This perception of fate control was strongly related to the test scores of all Negro groups. With or without family background characteristics partialled out, it accounted for about three times as much variance in the test scores of Negroes as of whites at the higher grade levels, both in the North and South. However, on another attitude that was less closely related to Negro test performance, desegregation seemed to have an adverse effect: Negro children in racially mixed classrooms tended to rate themselves lower on intellectual ability than Negroes who were racially isolated. Apparently, gains in the sense of fate control for integrated children outweighed the detrimental effects of lowered self-esteem, since actual achievement was relatively high.

A final item from this survey that should be mentioned is the fact that there were data on the percentages of white students in the ninth and twelfth grades who chose all-white "close friends" and preferred all-white classrooms.

Quite consistently, the effect of desegregation appeared to be favorable: White children who began their interracial school experiences in the first three grades tended to have less preference than other white students for all-white friends and classes.

Due to the time pressures under which it was prepared, the Coleman Report devoted relatively little attention to the effects of desegregation. The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, therefore, undertook the tasks of more thoroughly analyzing certain portions of the Coleman data and of carrying out new investigations that had bearing on this problem. The Commission was particularly interested in establishing whether or not the apparently favorable effects of desegregation could be attributed, at least in part, to the factor of racial composition per se when the following additional differences between racially mixed and isolated classrooms were controlled by means of cross-tabulations: 1, quality of educational services available; 2, academic ability and social class background of classmates; and, 3, academic ability and home backgrounds of the Negro students. Controlling for these three sets of factors, the Commission found a consistent relationship between racial composition of the classroom and Negro verbal achievement. The apparent benefits of interracial classrooms were not linear; that is, Negroes in predominantly white classrooms scored higher on the average, but those in classrooms with some, but less than half, whites, did no better than those in all-Negro classrooms. As pointed out in the Coleman Report, the beneficial effect appeared to be greatest for those Negro children whose biracial contacts began in the early grades. Moreover, the achievement scores of white children in classes with some, but less than a majority of, Negroes were just as high as those of their counterparts in all-white classes.

The Commission suggested that an important contributing element to the

inefficiency of racially isolated schools is the fact that they are often regarded by the community as inferior institutions and that students and teachers sense that their schools are stigmatized, with detrimental consequences for their motivation.

Special surveys of white and Negro adults revealed some of the long-lasting consequences of school segregation. The Commission's report, Racial Isolation in the Public Schools, states:

> Racial isolation also appears to have a negative effect upon the job opportunities of Negroes. Negro adults who experienced desegregated schooling tend to have higher incomes and more often hold white-collar jobs than Negro adults who attended isolated schools. These differences are traceable to the higher achievement levels of the Negroes from desegregated schools, and, in part, to the fact that association with whites often aids Negroes in competing more effectively in the job market.
>
> Attendance in racially isolated schools tends to generate attitudes on the part of Negroes and whites that lead them to prefer association with members of their own race. The attitudes appear early in the schools, carry over into later life, and are reflected in behavior. Both Negroes and whites are less likely to have associations with members of the other race if they attended racially isolated schools. Racial isolation not only inflicts educational damage upon Negro students when they are in school, it reinforces the very attitudes and behavior that maintain and intensify racial isolation as well.
>
> Moreover, the absence of interracial contact perpetuates the sense that many whites have that Negroes and Negro schools are inferior.[18]

Despite the thoroughness of the Commission's cross-tabulational analyses, it could not surmount the basic limitations of cross-sectional research designs. Only longitudinal studies, involving experimental features such

as before-and-after measurement, matching and random assignment of subjects to different types of schools and classrooms, and elaborate safeguards against the biasing effect of the "Hawthorne" and similar phenomena, can provide definitive answers to questions about the effects of desegregation. However, the two Federal reports discussed here stand as rich sources of hypotheses for future research and as the best available empirical guides for the practical decision-making of public and school officials.

Finding the Mediators of Desegregation Effects

The Commission report stressed the distinction between a merely desegregated school and an integrated one. Desegregation refers only to the racial composition of student enrollments, while integration involves the social-psychological quality of the interracial contact. Calling attention to the Coleman survey's finding of greater variability of Negro test performance in biracial classrooms, Pettigrew[5] observes that "merely desegregated schools can be either effective or ineffective, can boast genuine interracial acceptance or intense interracial hostility. In short, a desegregated school is not necessarily a 'good school.'" The Commission's analysis indicates that in desegregated schools where most teachers reported no racial tension, Negro students were higher on verbal achievement, had more definite plans for attending college, and had more favorable racial attitudes than Negroes in schools with high tension levels.

In a series of experiments, the present author and his associates have sought to clarify the factors that determine whether biracial contact will have beneficial or detrimental effects upon the intellectual performance of Negro students.[19] In two early studies conducted at a northern university, various tasks were assigned to groups composed of two Negro and two white students. In a variety of conditions, the Negroes were found to display

marked inhibition and subordination to white partners. They made fewer remarks than did the whites and tended to accept the whites' contributions uncritically. Later, they ranked the whites higher on ability and expressed relatively low satisfaction with the group experience. These effects occurred even when Negro and white partners were initially matched for ability on the basis of pretest scores. The inhibition of the Negro subjects was modified only after they were placed in a rigged problem-solving situation which virtually forced them to disagree with a white partner while displaying competence equal to that of the partner. The results suggested that fear of arousing white hostility was an important constraining factor.

The white subjects, apparently unaccustomed to having interactions with Negro peers, tended to ignore the suggestions of their Negro partners even when this entailed a reduction in team efficiency and, consequently, in monetary reward from the experimenter.

In another experiment, students at a predominantly Negro college in the South performed better on a verbal task in the presence of white peers and adults when stress, in the form of a threat of electric shock, was absent and the task was presented informally. But when Negro subjects expected strong shock, the white environment became less favorable for performance than an all-Negro environment. Thus, vulnerability to stress was greater in the biracial condition, even though it did not become apparent until a strong explicit threat was introduced. Similarly, in a further experiment, southern Negro college students scored higher on a verbal task with a white tester than with a Negro tester when the task was presented as a measure of nonintellectual capacity (e.g., eye-hand coordination). When the same task was described as an intelligence test, however, the relationship tended to reverse.

In later studies, most of them as yet unpublished, two factors have been

varied independently of one another -- the race of the experimenter and the race of the peer norms with which Negro subjects expected to have their test scores compared. When Negro adults were used to administer cognitive tests, the academic quality of the predominantly Negro colleges from which subjects were drawn seemed to determine their reactions to the white norm and Negro norm conditions. At colleges with relatively low academic standards, Negro students performed better when they expected to be compared with other Negroes. On the other hand, at colleges with high academic standards, anticipated comparison with white peers was more motivating.

The effect of varying the race of the adult examiner, when the race of the comparison group was held constant, also seemed to depend upon the academic quality of the Negro colleges at which the experiments were carried out. At a college with a selective admissions policy, Negro students worked better on cognitive tasks for a white tester, while Negro students at a non-selective college scored higher with a Negro tester.

Finally, Negro performance in various types of racial settings was shown to be influenced by the subjects' expectations of success, which were manipulated by providing fictitious information about their scores on pretests. A moderate expectancy (i.e., 60 percent probability of success) produced better cognitive performance in both biracial and uniracial environments than did a very low expectancy (i.e., 10 percent).

All of the experimental findings of this author and his co-workers are consistent with a four-factor model of Negro achievement in biracial settings, which he has summarized:

> Low probability of success -- where there is marked discrepancy in the educational standards of Negro and white schools, or where feelings of inferiority are acquired by Negro children outside the

school, minority-group newcomers in integrated classrooms are likely to have a low expectancy of academic success; consequently their achievement motivation should be low. Social threat -- given the prestige and power of the white majority group, rejection of Negro students by white classmates or teachers should tend to elicit emotional responses (fear, anger, and humiliation) that are detrimental to intellectual functioning. Failure threat -- when academic failure entails disapproval by significant others (parents, teachers, and perhaps also classmates), low expectancy of success should elicit emotional responses that are detrimental to performance.

On the other hand, acceptance of Negroes by white peers and adults should have a social facilitation effect upon their ability to learn, by motivating them to adhere to white standards of academic performance; anticipation that high performance will win white approval should endow scholastic success with high-incentive value.[20]

A recent study underscores the complexity of these mediational processes. Heretofore, the experimental subjects had mostly been Negro college students. But when grade school Negro boys from a New York City slum were tested, the social facilitation factor previously evident with white experimenters did not operate.[21] Better learning of a verbal task occurred with Negro adults than with white adults, even when all examiners gave overt approval at regular intervals. Apparently, the racial attitudes which the Negro children brought to the experimental situation caused them to reject approval from a white stranger as insincere. As measured by a personality questionnaire, however, disapproval from white testers was highly damaging to performance, particularly for Negro boys with a strong need for approval.

In a provocative article, Pettigrew shows how social comparison concepts can be applied to the dynamics of the biracial classroom.[22] He proposes a broad hypothesis which is consistent with the empirical findings and interpretations of this author, as well as with data from both the Coleman and

Commission reports. Pettigrew suggests that "many of the consequences of interracial classrooms for both Negro and white children are a direct function of the opportunities such classrooms provide for cross-racial self-evaluation." It follows from such a hypothesis, he continues, "that the more opportunities for cross-racial self-evaluation a school provides, the greater the consequences. And it also follows that those children for whom peers of the other race become referent should evince the largest changes." Among the many predictions from the hypothesis that are consistent with the Federal data is one to the effect that the major consequences of interracial schools for both Negro and white students would be found among those who report having close friends of the other race. No tables relevant to the prediction are available for whites. For Negroes, however, it was found that having close white friends was related neither to achievement test scores nor to college aspirations in all-Negro classrooms, but in predominantly white classrooms Negro children with close white friends showed both higher achievement and higher educational aspirations than Negroes having no close white friends.

Pettigrew's hypothesis specifies <u>consequences</u> of desegregation and not simply <u>benefits</u>. He discusses the conditions under which cross-racial comparison would arouse anxious expectations of failure and feelings of social threat in Negro students. But he concludes that on balance the consequences of such comparison appear to be beneficial. The Federal surveys, it will be recalled, revealed higher performance levels among Negro children in majority white classrooms and generally favorable attitudes toward desegregated education on the part of Negro adults who had themselves attended desegregated schools as children.

Teacher Characteristics and Their Influence on Learning

Research is urgently needed to unravel the underlying social-psychological

dynamics of the teaching-learning process. Some illuminating facts about teachers of white and Negro pupils were recently reported by Herriott and St. John.[23] Their data are based on interviews with a national sample of teachers and principals in urban public schools. Schools were divided into four categories on the basis of the socioeconomic level (SES) of the pupil enrollment. Not surprisingly, racial composition of the student body was closely related to SES. Thus, only two percent of students in schools of highest SES were Negro, while 73 percent of pupils were Negro in the schools of lowest SES. Both principals' and teachers' replies to a series of questions indicate that the lower the school SES, the smaller the proportion of teachers who enjoyed their work, had personal loyalty to the principal, desired to remain at their present school, had favorable opinions of the motivation and behavior of their pupils, and did not waste a lot of time in the classroom. As reported by principals only, the lower the school SES the smaller the proportion of teachers who were competent, made an effort to improve their competence, and were strongly interested in their students. The meaning of these teacher differences is that, on the average, children from low-income homes, most of whom are Negro, got more than their fair share of classroom exposure to teachers who are really unqualified for their role, who basically resent teaching them, and who, therefore, behave in ways that foster in the more dependent students tendencies toward debilitating self-criticism.

Without knowing more about the matter, one might be tempted to assume that these teachers are essentially reacting to the intellectual and motivational deficiencies of the minority group pupils. But, surely, this is only partly true. Davidson and Lang found that <u>regardless of their scholastic standing</u>, elementary school pupils from blue-collar homes tended to perceive their teachers as rejecting.[24] In two small sample studies, one by Gottlieb[25]

and another by Clark,[26] the race of teachers seemed to make a difference in how they viewed Negro students, with white teachers (who outnumber Negro teachers in most predominantly Negro schools in the North) being more critical of their motivation and ability. But one should not conclude on the basis of very slight evidence that there is a general race difference among teachers. In a segregated Detroit school where this author found Negro boys of average and below average ability inclined to be harshly self-critical, the teaching staff was predominantly Negro.

Experiments could be done on teachers' responsiveness to children's needs as a function of racial differences. White and Negro teachers could be required to observe biracial groups of children and then to report on each child, first at a descriptive level and then at an inferential level where the child's emotional needs and interests were considered. The richness and detail of report and validity, when compared with objective information, could be evaluated in relation to the race of the teacher-observer and the race of the object-child. It could be ascertained what teacher characteristics are associated with accuracy of observation of own-race and other-race children. One might also examine the characteristics of teachers children like and from whom they learn readily.

An ingenious experiment by Rosenthal and Jacobson[27] on the effect of teachers' expectations upon the intellectual growth of their pupils suggests another worthwhile direction for future research. Elementary school teachers were told that certain children were likely, on the basis of fictitious test scores, to "spurt ahead" intellectually during the ensuing year. At the lower grades, the randomly designated "intellectual bloomers" showed larger I.Q. gains at the end of the year than their classmates. The effect was due entirely to the expectation that had been implanted in the minds of the

teachers. Rosenthal and Jacobson's data, however, do not tell us in what specific ways the teachers' expectations affected their behavior toward the experimental group pupils. It is important, therefore, that the experiment be followed up with studies in which teachers would be given different kinds of information about a child (e.g., whether he is bright or dull, middle class or working class, Negro or white) and then required to teach the child a standard task. A question to be asked would be "do the differential cues influence the amount of effort expended by the adult in instructing the child, the amount and kinds of reinforcement, unconscious expressions of acceptance or rejection?" One might also examine whether the child senses the teacher's attitude toward him by testing his perception of the teacher after the instructional period. The results of such experiments could be used in the training of new teachers as a means of sensitizing them to the human relations aspects of their future work.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The purpose of this paper has not been to present an exhaustive review of previous research on desegregation, but rather to indicate the major areas in which further empirical work is needed both from the standpoint of guiding public policy decisions and advancing basic scientific knowledge. Various findings and hypotheses have been discussed when they appeared to offer promising leads for future inquiries. Many informative and valuable studies have been omitted because they seemed to be less directly relevant to issues of public school desegregation than those that are mentioned. Clearly, only a lengthy monograph could begin to do full justice to the present topic, but it is hoped that this brief discussion will provide a useful point of entry for

interested social scientists into a range of practical and theoretical problems that invite their attention.

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